

BOARD OF PARK COMMISSIONERS

SPECIAL MEETING WICHITA BOATHOUSE Saturday, April 3 2004 10:00 a.m.

Present: Bob Aldrich, June Bailey, Dennis Brunner, Colleen Craig, Glen Dey, Janet Miller

Absent: Bobbie Harris

Also Present: Jack Patton; Rosalie Bradley – District Advisory Board VI; Joanne Hardig – District Advisory Board I; *Carlos Mayans; Mike North, Law Department; and Doug Kupper, Larry Foos, Tim Martz, David McGuire and Maryann Crockett (staff)

President Bailey called the meeting to order at approximately 10:00 a.m. Director Kupper introduced the new Superintendent of Park and Recreation Larry Foos, commenting briefly on his recreation background and stating that he came to Wichita from Sterling, CO. He also updated the Board on the near drowning at Watson Park on Friday, April 2, 2004, stating that the toddler was still in critical condition.

1. Workshop Discussion Items.

- Capital Improvement Program (CIP). Director Kupper provided board members a handout, which was a copy of the 2004-2013 Capital Improvement Program Budget. He commented that the 2004-2005 program budget was set, but that the 2006-2013 program was subject to review and adjustment by the City Council. He explained that GO meant General Obligation funds and that OTHER could be funds from a variety of sources including private donations, grants, and State and Federal monies.

Bob Aldrich asked about funding for Botanica and Cowtown. Director Kupper stated that Botanica's CIP was a separate budget. He also explained that although the City does support Cowtown, Sedgwick County provides the majority of Cowtown funding. Janet Miller asked what were the specific plans for the \$400,000 allocated each year starting in 2006 for Enhancement Projects. Director Kupper commented that staff would develop projects for those funds based on input from the Park Board, District Advisory Board (DAB) and citizens at large. There was discussion concerning a number of needs including land acquisition and development, facility renovation and design work for various future projects.

Bob Aldrich asked if staff had a project priority list. Director Kupper responded that 2004 and 2005 projects were set; however, projects occurring after 2006 were not yet firmly established. Janet Miller commented that the planning process for those funds needed to start as soon as possible. She said she believed the department had a better chance of retaining those funds if a specific plan was in place for their use. Bob Aldrich suggested that the Board and staff focus on needs rather than wants. Director Kupper said he could rely on staff to provide a list of needs. He said the Board could provide the vision for future development of new facilities. He stated that that some of the City's recreation centers were antiquated and needed to be torn down and

replaced. He also mentioned the fine job that the Young Men's Christian Association (YMCA) was doing establishing multi-use centers throughout the City. There was brief discussion concerning recreation programs and whether the City should compete with the YMCA.

- Budget. Director Kupper reviewed a PowerPoint presentation on the Park and Recreation Department Budget. He briefly reviewed each division including Park Maintenance and Forestry, Recreation, Golf, Century II and Expo Hall, CityArts/Cultural Arts Division, and Botanica.

Bob Aldrich asked if staff had any figures concerning recreation trends over the last ten years. Janet Miler also asked for recreation revenue and expense figures over the last ten years. David McGuire stated that staff could probably provide figures for the last three years. He also mentioned that participation in recreation programs had gone up and down over the years, but had definitely declined since September 11, 2003. Director Kupper mentioned that staff had been given instructions to narrow the gap between revenue and expenses on all fee-based programs. He said there has also been discussion concerning the reason public recreation programs were established in the first place and the need to provide affordable recreational programming for "at risk" youth.

Responding to a question from Janet Miller, David McGuire stated that about twelve percent of the Summer of Discovery (SOD) participants were on some type of scholarship program. In addition, Mr. McGuire stated that the City offers a number of free after school programs for youth.

Bob Aldrich asked about cutting back on pool hours. Director Kupper said staff had tried extending the hours at several pools last year including College Hill, McAdams and Harvest; however, participation at the locations did not pan out as expected and the program would probably be discontinued. He said extending pool hours was also a staffing issue because most of the pool staff (pool managers and lifeguards) is college students who quit early to have a vacation prior to returning to school. David McGuire said he thought schools were starting early this year, around August 24.

Janet Miller asked about expenses on athletic fields. Director Kupper stated that the study conducted by Management Partners suggested thirty percent cost recovery on maintenance expenses.

There was brief discussion concerning expansion of Century II Expo Hall to 250,000 square feet in order for the City to compete regionally for various events and trade shows. There was also discussion of updating the facility so sound would not "bleed through" to other areas of the facility and expanding facility parking.

2. Executive Session.

On motion by Bailey, second by Dey, IT WAS VOTED UNANIMOUSLY that the Board recess into executive session for consultation with legal counsel on matters privileged in the attorney-client relationship relating to Ordinance #125 and that the Board return from executive session in approximately one hour at 12:00 p.m.

The Board returned from executive session at approximately 11:50 a.m. No action was necessary as a result of the executive session.

It was suggested that the Board return to the workshop discussion items until the tour at 12:00 p.m..

- Land Acquisition. Director Kupper briefly reviewed land acquisition over the last five years including, but not limited to: Pat Garcia Memorial Park, eight acres from Billy Gray, and five acres for adult soccer at Bridgeport. Bob Aldrich suggested improving and renovating existing facilities prior to acquiring additional property. Director Kupper mentioned numerous improvements that were taking place such as paving parking lots, shortening mowing rotation times around recreation centers to provide a better image of park property, replacing playgrounds and generally taking care of the facilities and items that give the biggest return on the investment and produce revenues such as maintenance and improvement of athletic fields. He mentioned that Public Works has also been working with the department on painting and other projects to improve recreation centers.

Glen Dey said he did not necessarily agree with the concept of land acquisition being a low priority since the City was expanding and annexing new areas. He said parks needed to get into the mix with other City services.

There was brief discussion concerning development of new properties. Bob Aldrich mentioned the new park at Planeview. Director Kupper commented that Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) funds had been allocated for the project; however, the current play area does not get much use. Bob Aldrich asked for a list of priorities for land acquisition. Director Kupper mentioned that Districts II and IV were short on parkland. He also mentioned a possible plan to acquire property outside the City Limits in Sedgwick County.

*Mayor Carlos Mayans present.

3. Other Items.

- a) *Park Encroachments.* Dennis Brunner mentioned the numerous encroachments at Country Acres.
- b) *Metro Park Alliance.* Janet Miller mentioned that the GreenWay Alliance was creating a metro park alliance to develop a long-term region wide solution and plan for future park development. She said one idea being discussed was setting aside land for park purposes and getting green space incorporated into platted areas.
- c) *Funding for additional maintenance items.* Janet Miller requested that in the future whenever the Park Department is assigned additional responsibilities, such as median mowing and maintenance and maintenance of other developed projects, that the Park Maintenance budget be increased proportionately.

Mayor Mayans commented that the City had furnished the Kansas Department of Transportation (KDOT) a list of properties the City was maintaining that belonged to KDOT with a suggestion that the properties be given to the City to sell or otherwise dispose of. He said staff was still awaiting an answer from that agency.

Janet Miller mentioned the high maintenance of some of the new landscaping along Kellogg and how often some of those areas needed to be mowed, when in contrast, most park areas are only

mowed once every three weeks. There was brief discussion concerning West Kellogg expansion including number of acres, number of irrigation lines and heads, and the reorganization of the Park and Public Works Departments in the late 1999's where Public Works took responsibility for maintenance of all buildings and Park and Recreation took responsibility for outdoor public areas.

The meeting recessed to the park tour at approximately 12:05 p.m.

Other participants on the tour included Bill Gale and Council Members Sharon Fearey and Sue Schlapp. The tour stopped at the following locations: Central Riverside Park; Sim Park; North Woodland Park; K-96 Lake; Grove Park; Northeast Sports Complex; Harrison Park; Linwood Park; and drove by Linwood School.

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 3:45 p.m.

June Bailey, President

ATTEST:

Maryann Crockett, Clerk
Recording Secretary